

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-47 are pending. Claims 42-47 have been added.

In response to the objection to the Abstract, a new Abstract is attached on a separate sheet. Applicants respectfully request that the new Abstract be approved and that this objection be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Claims 1-41 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. patent No. 6,348,971 to Owa et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

According to exemplary embodiments, a metavariable is provided that is indicative of at least two parameters of a device. The metavariable contains data cumulative of variables for each parameter. The metavariable is treated as a single, simple variable.

The metavariable may be data indicative of the configuration and settings of a transmitting device or process, such as the settings of a printer. The metavariable may also be data indicative of the configuration and settings of a receiving device or process. The metavariable may be a command altering two or more settings of a receiving device, such as a command to a printer to change print quality which causes several parameter changes. The metavariable may also be data indicative of two or more application settings of a transmitting device or a receiving device, giving the device the ability to state in one variable the parameters of its configuration or the parameters relative to its particular application. When the metavariable is transmitted and received on the same device, it can reflect either one or more parameters of a process or one or more parameters or settings of the device.

The metavariable allows devices, such as a host computer and a printer, to easily represent complicated settings through abstraction. The metavariable is able to relay exact changes required or a current configuration without communicating every variable included in the change or configuration.

Claim 1 recites an interface between two or more devices having a data store, each device in communication with one or more of the other devices. The interface comprises a datastream including at least one metavariable. The metavariable is indicative of at least two or more

to the data store of one or more receiving devices.

The Action relies on Owa for all the features recited in claim 1. Owa discloses a printing system and method for selecting an optimum printer for printing. As described at col. 3, l. 51 through col. 4, l. 5 of Owa, basic information regarding various printers is obtained and stored in a host. The basic information includes model names, performance, additional function, and installation locations of the printers. The information stored in the basic information setting section is referred to when a printer is selected for printing.

The Action alleges that the “basic information” of Owa corresponds to the metavariable as claimed. However, in Owa, the basic information is not a metavariable indicative of at least two or more parameters of a device as recited in claim 1. Rather, the basic information described in Owa includes multiple individual variables, each variable indicative of one parameter of a device.

As to the other features recited in claim 1, it is not entirely clear from the Office Action what device in Owa is considered the “transmitting device” and what device in Owa is considered the “receiving device” as claimed. As the “basic information” is obtained by the host, it appears that the Office Action considers the “host” to be the claimed receiving device, the “printer” to be the claimed transmitting device, and the “basic information” to be the claimed metavariable. However, this interpretation is inconsistent with other rejections in the Action, e.g., the rejection of claim 3, in which the “printer” of Owa is identified as corresponding to the claimed “receiving device”. If the rejections are maintained, Applicants respectfully request that it be specifically pointed out what device in Owa is considered the “receiving device” and what device is considered the “transmitting device” as claimed.

Since Owa fails to show all the features recited in claim 1, claim 1 is considered allowable over Owa. Claims 10, 16, 23, 32 and 38 recite similar features as claim 1 and are considered allowable for at least the same reasons.

Claims 2-9 and 42, 11-15 and 43, 17-22 and 44, 24-31 and 45, 33-37 and 46, and 39-41 and 47 depend from claims 1, 10, 16, 23, 32, and 38, respectively, and are considered allowable

for at least the same reasons. In addition, these claims recite further features not disclosed or suggested by Owa.

For example, claim 4 recites that the metavariable is a command altering two or more settings of the receiving device upon receipt of the metavariable by the receiving device. The Action points to col. 5, ll. 9-25 of Owa for this feature. This portion of Owa describes how printer selection conditions are set at a host for various users. These conditions are compared with the basic information regarding printers, and an appropriate printer is selected based on this comparison. See col. 5, l. 3 through col. 7, l. 22 of Owa. Nowhere in this portion or any other portion of Owa is there a disclosure or suggestion of a metavariable that is a command altering two or more settings of the receiving device upon receipt of the metavariable by the receiving device. For this additional reason, claim 4 is considered allowable.

Applicants respectfully request that if the position is maintained that the features recited in claim 4 are shown by Owa, it be specifically pointed out where in Owa there is a basis for this view.

Claims 8, 12, 15, 21, 26, 30, 34, 37, and 41 recite similar features as claim 4 and are considered allowable for at least the same reasons.

New claim 42 recites that the metavariable is treated as a single, simple variable containing data cumulative of variables for each parameter. This feature is not disclosed or suggested by Owa. Therefore, new claim 42 is considered allowable over Owa for this additional reason.

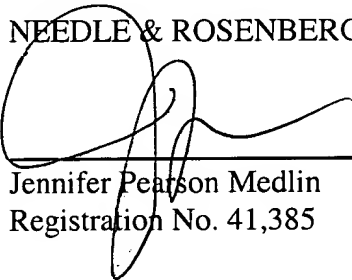
New claims 43-47 recite similar features as new claim 42 and are considered allowable for at least the same reasons.

For the foregoing reasons, claims 1-47 are considered allowable. A Notice to this effect is respectfully solicited.

A Credit Card Payment Authorization Form (PTO-2038) in the amount of \$218.00 is attached for the additional claim fee and a one-month Extension of Time. This amount is believed to be correct; however, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 14-0629.

Respectfully submitted,

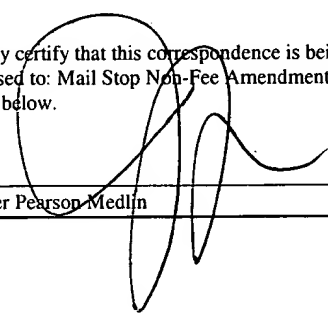
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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Non-Fee Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on the date shown below.

  
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